

The FAIR

Fair Allocations In Research

FOUNDATION

www.FAIRFoundation.org

Submitted by e-mail

08/3/08

David Shipley, Op-Ed editor
 The Op-Ed Page
 620 Eighth Avenue
 New York, NY 10018

Dear Mr. Shipley,

I respectfully submit Op-Ed below with corroborating footnotes and, on behalf of our 27-member Board of Directors of transplant surgeons, medical directors, et al, we thank you for your consideration of publishing it.

Gratefully,

Dr. Richard Darling, DDS

Dr. Richard Darling, DDS: [Past National Public Citizen of the Year \(NASW\)](#)
 President and CEO: [The FAIR Foundation](#), a national organization with thousands of members and supporters whose goal is to reverse inequities in NIH research funding and to institute [new organ-donor policies](#) to reverse America's organ-donor crisis
 Founder: [The FAIR Foundation Liver Disease & Transplant Support Group](#)
 Author: [Coma Life](#), an autobiographical memoir of life "within" coma and survival over hepatitis C induced liver cancer, coma, 3 liver transplants, heart attack, diabetes & Muscular Dystrophy (Myasthenia Gravis)

Disease	2007 NIH Research \$	Deaths Per Disease	\$ Per Patient Death	\$ Per Patient
HIV/AIDS	2.9 Billion	14,016	\$ 206,906	\$ 3,052
Cardiovascular Dis.	2.3 Billion	871,500	\$ 2,639	\$ 29
Diabetes	1 Billion	74,817	\$ 13,365	\$ 39
Alzheimer's Dis.	644 Million	721,696	\$ 8,828	\$ 124
Prostate Cancer	344 Million	27,050	\$ 12,717	\$ 181
Parkinson's Dis.	186 Million	19,547	\$ 9,516	\$ 124
Hepatitis C	107 Million	12,000	\$ 8,916	\$ 20
Hepatitis B	42 Million	5,000	\$ 8,400	\$ 34
COPD**	90 Million	126,128	\$ 714	\$ 7
Breast Cancer	716 Million	40,910	\$ 17,501	\$ 3,967
All Cancers	5.5 Billion	559,650	\$ 9,888	\$ 3,830
West Nile Virus	56 Million	121	\$ 462,809	\$ 15,564

Op-Ed submitted to the NY Times by Dr. Richard Darling, DDS

Lawrence Altman's *H.I.V. Study Says Rate 40% Higher Than Estimate* (08/03/08) is yet another grossly misleading, alarmist HIV headline to attract viewership with its complete disregard for the facts. Altman buried the CDC's salient information eight paragraphs into the story; his headline should have been *Study Says Rate 40% Higher Than Estimate, BUT NO increase in the number of new infections.*

It's quite simple: if you use different math, you get a new total. The number of new infections did not go from 40,000 to 56,300 last year as Altman's story implies, it was stable and if true, it has been around 56,000 annually for a decade.

40% sounds large doesn't it? That's an average of 326 more for each of the fifty states—a much less dramatic headline, but more representative of the “new math.”

Indeed, in Altman's story, C.D.C. officials admitted the revised figure did not necessarily represent an increase in the number of new infections. Yet when Dr. Philip Alcabes raised questions about the validity of the findings and stated that, if true, the agency has undercounted new H.I.V. infections for about 15 years, the CDC replied that Dr. Alcabes's estimates were incorrect because the new figures could not be used to calculate the total number of people with H.I.V. The C.D.C. then confessed that it does not know the total number of infections.

Talk about double-speak.

Equally dismal as this suspiciously timed CDC announcement just prior to the 17th International AIDS Conference is the pathetic attempt to politicize this issue by Rep. Waxman who stated that we are not spending sufficient funds on HIV. Since the onset of HIV, the US has spent in excess of a quarter trillion dollars on this malady and Congress just went home without passing an energy-drilling bill, but they did find time to give \$50 billion more for global HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB.

More prevention education is needed? Nonsense. If a US citizen can read or can hear, he/she knows of HIV's dangers because it is difficult to read or listen to the news on any given day without exaggerative, alarmist news regarding this illness. Altman's report is a prime example.

Deaths in this country from HIV disease have plummeted over 90 percentⁱ in many states and are reported by the CDC at 14,016ⁱⁱ compared to 871,500, 72,815 and 72,696 for cardiovascular disease (CVD), diabetes and Alzheimer's disease. Which would you label a “crisis”?

According to the United Nations, chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and COPD kill many millions more globally than HIV/AIDS.^{iii iv}

Although such great success has been made against HIV/AIDS, it still receives \$2.9 billion—ten percent—of our entire bio-medical research budget. Such exorbitant funding results in our government spending \$3,052 on each HIV/AIDS patient versus only \$29, \$39 and \$124 on each CVD, diabetic and Alzheimer’s patient respectively.^v Six thousand orphan (rare) illnesses receive only \$200,000, on average, for research per disease.

“But AIDS is affecting more women and children than ever,” AIDS activists state.

In women, heart disease and lung cancer kill 267,000 and 68,122 respectively compared to 3,784 deaths with HIV/AIDS.^{vi} In children, the CDC estimates 38 children^{vii} under the age of 13 have AIDS with thirteen deaths^{viii}. Compare that to 2,500 child deaths annually from just one disease: sudden infant death syndrome.^{ix}

Our government’s top HIV/AIDS researcher, Anthony Fauci, MD, has said, “...the scientific advancements that have been made in HIV [research] are breathtaking [with] highly effective drugs to suppress HIV to the point where what was a death sentence in the early eighties to now having patients who look and feel well, who are leading very productive, very gratifying lives..”^x

It is now time for the media to stop its AIDS-favoritism and for the US government to redirect a portion of HIV/AIDS funding to other diseases that are currently receiving billions less than HIV/AIDS, including the sixteen^{xi} that kill over a million more Americans than AIDS annually.

ⁱ http://fairfoundation.org/states/hiv-aids_deaths_by_state.htm

ⁱⁱ <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports/2006report/table7.htm>

ⁱⁱⁱ http://fairfoundation.org/news_letter/2008/02june/UN_chronic_diseases_kill_more.pdf

^{iv} <http://www.phmiracleliving.com/world-clock.htm>

^v <http://www.fairfoundation.org/factslinks.htm>

^{vi} <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports/2006report/table7.htm>

^{vii} <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports/2006report/table4.htm>

^{viii} <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports/2006report/table7.htm>

^{ix} <http://www.sids.org/>

^x <http://fairfoundation.org/fauci.wmv>

^{xi} <http://www.fairfoundation.org/thesixteen.htm>